

REMARKS

1. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they include first reference signs not mentioned in the specification. Additionally, the drawings do not include second reference sign mentioned in the specification. Responsive thereto, the specification has been amended to include mention of the first reference signs. Applicant includes herewith a redline of Figure 20, that includes second reference sign. Accordingly, the objection under 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) is deemed overcome.

2. The specification is objected to based on a number of informalities. Responsive thereto, the specification has been amended to correct the noted informalities.

3. Applicant has capitalized all occurrences of trademarks throughout the specification.

4. The specification is objected to under MPEP 608.01 due to the inclusion of several hyperlinks. Responsive thereto, Applicant has amended the application to omit all hyperlinks.

5. Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,799,063 ("Krane"). Applicant respectfully disagrees. Krane describes a system in which users access audio data embedded in pre-indexed web pages. A user of the described system locates a desired web page by selecting from a scrolling menu of selections. Thus, the user is merely presented with a series of options from which to select. There is no teaching in Krane of "determining if the attribute satisfies an end state, wherein if the end state is not satisfied, performing steps (a) and (b) with a new particular attribute.

In stark contrast, the invention elicits information by:

“a. establishing an attribute value associated with a particular attribute of a desired item or service; and

b. determining if the attribute satisfies an end state, wherein if the end state is not satisfied, performing steps (a) and (b) with a new particular attribute.”

Thus, the invention queries the user, iteratively eliciting more information, until it can supply a unique item or service having the desired characteristics. Accordingly, the rejection under 35 USC § 102(b) of Claim 1 and all Claims depending therefrom is deemed improper.

6. Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Krane. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Crane’s system provides an index of web pages having embedded audio files. There is no teaching in Krane of a “database storing information regarding attributes” and “attribute vocabulary sets.” The reference is completely silent as to the content or structure of the index, other than to say that it is an index of web pages. Accordingly, the rejection under 35 USC § 102(b) of Claim 9 and all Claims depending therefrom is deemed improper.

7. Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Krane. In order to distinguish the Claimed invention from the cited reference more thoroughly, Claim 17 has been amended as follows:

“A voice portal configured to funnel user responses to determine a desired item or service, the voice portal comprising:

means for performing the step of:

(a) establishing an attribute an attribute value associated with a particular attribute of desired item or service; and

means for performing the step of:

(b) determining if the attribute value satisfies an end state, wherein if the end state is not satisfied, performing steps (a) and (b) with a new particular attribute."

5 As above, there is no teaching in Krane of determining if the attribute value satisfies an end state, wherein if the end state is not satisfied, performing steps (a) and (b) with a new particular attribute. Accordingly, the rejection of Claim 17, and all Claims depending therefrom under 35 USC § 102(b) is deemed overcome.

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8. Claim 24 stands rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Krane. The above remarks regarding Claim 1 apply equally to Claim 24. Thus, the rejection of Claim 24 and all Claims depending therefrom under 35 USC § 102(b) is deemed to be improper.

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9. Claims 5, 6 and 22 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Krane in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,272,455 ("Hoshen"). In view of the above, the rejection under 35 USC § 103(a) is deemed to be moot.

20 10. Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Krane in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,400,806 ("Uppaluru"). In view of the above, the rejection under 35 USC § 103(a) is deemed to be moot.

25 11. Claim 16 stands rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Krane in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,401,085 ("Gershmman, *et al.*") In view of the above, the rejection under 35 USC § 103(a) is deemed to be moot.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, the application is deemed to be in allowable condition. Therefore, the Examiner is earnestly requested to withdraw all objections and
5 rejections, allowing the application to pass to issue as a United States Patent. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the application, he is urged to contact the applicant's attorney at the telephone number given below.

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Respectfully submitted,



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AMENDMENTS (MARKED-UP COPY)

In the Claims:

- 5 17. (Amended) A voice portal configured to funnel user responses to determine a desired item or service, the voice portal comprising:
- means for performing the step of:
- (a) establishing an attribute value associated with a particular attribute of a desired item or service; and
- 10 means for performing the step of:
- (b) determining if the attribute value satisfies an end state, wherein if the end state is not satisfied, performing steps (a) and (b) with a new particular attribute.



AMENDMENTS (MARKED-UP COPY)

5 In the Specification:

Page 14, line 15 to line 23:

10 Customer management subsystem 130 coordinates the management of information related to the user and the users' use of voice portal 10. In an exemplary embodiment, customer management subsystem 130 acquires information on the user, such as, preferences and demographics, which are selectively used by user interface 110, advertising subsystem 120, and other functions of voice portal 10. Customer management subsystem [120] 130 can perform additional functions related to
15 identification, session, user, and payment protocols. Although subsystem 110, 120 and 130 are described separately, the operations of each can be integrated in a single unit without departing from the principles of the invention.

20 Page 19, line 7 to line 20:

Referring still to figure 2, existent subsystem 140 coordinates access by user interface 110, advertising subsystem 120, customer management subsystem 130, fusion engine 150, and update engine 160 to database 170. Data contained in database 170 is
25 gathered from Internet sources by update engine 160. In an exemplary embodiment, the data structure used in database [190] 170 is based on a hierarchy of "existants" or things and their relationships and associations with each other. Advantageously, the ability to replicate and modify information in database 170 is more easily done because database 170 interacts only with the existent subsystem 140. Existants and
30 their creation are described further with reference to FIGURES 4-10. Specifically, an exemplary data structure model for existants is described with reference to FIGURES 4-6 although various other structures for existants is described with reference to

FIGURES 4-6 although various other structures for existants can be utilized. Creation and updating of existants are described with reference to FIGURES 7-10.

5 Page 24, line 9 to line 15:

FIGURE 6 illustrates an exemplary data structure model 450 used by database 170 of voice portal [1]10 for information related to advertising. Depictions of inheritance and association relationships are the same as in the depiction of data structure model 300 in FIGURE 4. In an exemplary embodiment, advertising information arranged in data structure model 450 is contained in database 170. However, in alternative embodiments, such advertising information may be contained in a separate advertising database.

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Page 30, line 27 to page 31, line 9:

To start a new data source, a rule writer enters the data source (e.g. [Amazon] AMAZON Book) in a new vendor window 1120. The rule writer presses 'Enter' and clicks the 'New' button. After this action is performed, a graphical, a graphical user interface (GUI) 1300 illustrated in FIGURE 13 is shown. A URL is displayed corresponding to the selected vendor name. The rule writer is asked to confirm the correct URL. In the example of [Amazon] AMAZON book, [the] a URL for a domain [http://www.] "[Amazon]AMAZONBook.com" appears. However, the domain in the URL link should read [http://www.] "[Amazon]AMAZON.com." The rule writer corrects the URL and clicks the "done" button.

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Page 31, line 10 to line 21:

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Referring now to FIGURE 11, the rule writer selects the type of query that is desired. First, the rule writer selects query window 1140 and chooses from a list of potential

queries. For example, "book package" may be a possible query for the book vertical domain of interest. This search is started when the rule writer clicks on the "SDE" (search data editor) button in query window 1140. The SDE button invokes a search data editor, which provides a graphical user interface (GUI) 1400 illustrated in FIGURE 14. GUI 1400 shows a list of attributes useable in a search for the particular item of interest. For example, where books are being searched, attributes such as ISBN 1410 or UPC 1420 are shown. Where searches are for other items, attributes are listed which correspond to that item. A search for "Movie Showings" results with attributes listed, such as, Movie Package, time and showing date (see block 330 described with reference to FIGURE 14).

Page 31, line 22 to page 32, line 2:

The rule writer types a ISBN number into the corresponding data box and clicks 'Done.' Buttons 1430 in GUI 1400 advantageously allow the rule writer to save different search criteria during different searches. Once the search criteria is entered, the rule writer clicks 'Done' and because no rules have been defined for the particular data source (i.e., A[mazon]MAZON Book), a graphical user interface (GUI) 1500 illustrated in FIGURE 15 appears. GUI 1500 asks whether the rule writer wants to add a new rule or change the search data. In this example, the rule writer clicks on the "add" button and GUI 1500 expands to become graphical user interface (GUI) 1600 illustrated in FIGURE 16.

Page 32, line 3 to line 9:

Referring now to FIGURE 16, the rule writer confirms that the correct type of query is highlighted. In this example, ISBN is highlighted and the rule writer clicks on the "yes" button. A graphical user interface (GUI) 1700 illustrated in FIGURE 17 appears to instruct the rule writer that the home page of A[mazon]MAZON Book is loaded into the netscape browser. The rule writer is instructed to browse the web page associated to

the ISBN rule. Once the search page is loaded into the Internet browser, the rule writer clicks the “done” button.

5 Page 32, line 16 to line 26:

Data organizing tool 1025 (FIGURE 10) displays the resulting page in the Internet browser. If the page is correct, the rule writer clicks on “[okay] OK” on GUI 1900. A graphical user interface (GUI) 2000 illustrated in FIGURE 20 appears and asks how to
10 detect single items on the page if the search matches on multiple items. GUI 2000 is also used to indicate where to find the URL to get details about the queried item. If only a single item was found, the rule writer clicks the “defer” button because not enough information is present to build the regular expression. If multiple items are found, a regular expression is entered into a data window 2010. For example, an author search
15 may return multiple items because a single author may have written several books. In other cases, even if the query only matches one item, it may be necessary to follow an additional URL link to get the information.

20 Page 35, line 11 to line 25:

FIGURE 25 illustrates an exemplary process of fusing information in a database. In exemplary embodiment illustrated by FIGURE 25, a flowchart 2500 depicts a simplistic fusion process, or “quick fusion”, executed by fusion engine 150 (FIGURE 2). In a step
25 2510, update engine 160 receives information from network 20 and places the information in a existant data structure in database 170 via existant subsystem 140, which accesses database 170. After step 2510 is performed, a step 2515 is performed in which fusion engine 150 gathers exact fusion attributes from an attribute definition table corresponding to the existant retrieved in step 2510. After step 2515 is
30 performed, a step 25[12]20 is performed in which fusion engine 150 executes a “mash” of each fusion attribute from existants retrieved from database 170 into an easily comparable form. In an exemplary embodiment, a “mash” form removes spaces,

prepositions, and other non-essential words. Advantageously, a "mashed format provides for quick searching capabilities.

5 Page 39, line 12 to line 22:

Figure 27 illustrates an exemplary process of creating a canonical data structure from two data structures. A data file 27 is identified by a unique identification number and contains a first data file 2710, a second data file 2720, and a canonical data file 2730.

10 In an exemplary embodiment, first data file 2710 contains information relating to particular movie retrieved from the IMDB ("Internet Movie Database") website [(http://www.IMDB.com)]. Second data file 2720 includes movie information for a particular movie obtained from the R[eel]EEL.com website. In the example illustrated by FIGURE 27, data file 2710 includes a title "Boys of Arizona," the director "Wiltz," the
15 release year "1997," and a synopsis "great movie." Similarly data file 2720 includes a title "The Boys of Arizona," the director "Bob Wiltz," the release year "1998," and a synopsis which is blank.



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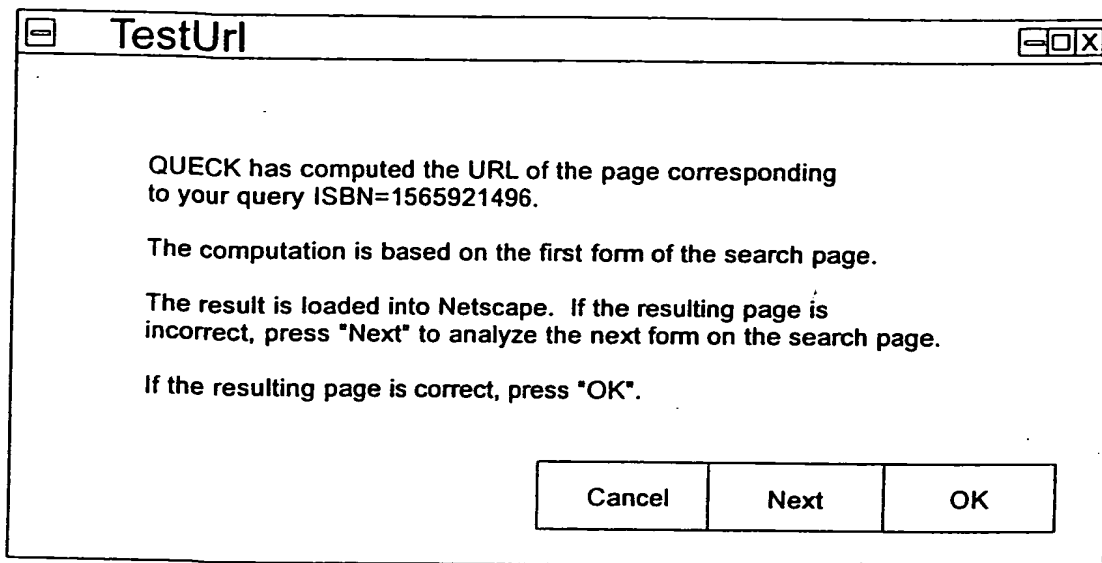


FIG. 19

2000

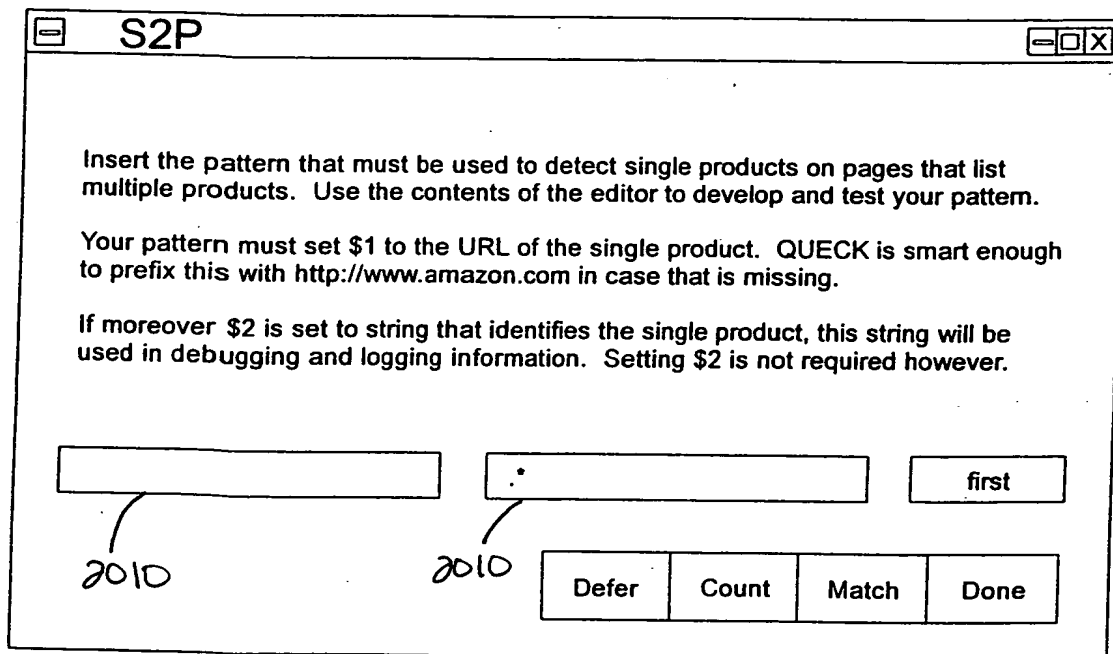


FIG. 20